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Creando una nueva humanidad: Reflexión sobre la  
tarea educativa de la Iglesia basada en Efesios 4:17-32

Pablo A. Jiménez

Mestizo Spirituality: Motifs of Sacrifice  
Transformation, Thanksgiving, and Family in Four  
Mexican American Rituals

Roberto L. Gómez

In fine, they must accordingly utterly cast off ornaments  
as girls' gorgaws, rejecting adornment itself entirely. For  
they ought to be adorned within, and show the inner woman  
beautiful. For the inner man is really beautiful and good. And it is laid down as a dogma, that  
only the beautiful is good. And excellence alone appears  
through the beautiful body, and blossoms out in the flesh,  
exhibiting the amiable comeliness of self-control, whenever  
the character like that of the plant is in the form. For  
the beauty of each plant and animal consists in its individual  
excellence. And the excellence of man is righteousness, and  
temperance, and manliness, and godliness. The beautiful  
man is, then, he who is just, temperate, and in a word, good,  
not he who is rich. But now even the soldiers wish to be  
adorned with gold, not having read that poetical saying:

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Arturo Bañuelas

Apuntes bibliográficos

Reflexiones

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## PRESENTACION

La reflexión sobre la tarea educativa de la iglesia nos llega por el **Rev. Pablo A. Jiménez**, ministro ordenado de la Iglesia Discípulos de Cristo en Puerto Rico, y director del Instituto Bíblico Discípulos de Cristo, en Puerto Rico.

El segundo artículo es del **Dr. Roberto L. Gómez**, superintendente de distrito de la Iglesia Metodista Unida en la Conferencia de Río Grande, quien es parte del equipo de Instructores Hispanos en el Programa México-Americano en la Escuela de Teología Perkins. Su campo es la consejería pastoral.

La bibliografía sobre teología Católica Romana en los EE.UU. fue compilada por el **Dr. Arturo Bañuelas** actual presidente de la Asociación de Teólogos Católicos Hispanos en los EE.UU. (ACHTUS), director del Instituto Tepeyac, y Profesor Adjunto de Estudios Hispanos en la Escuela Jesuít de Teología en Berkeley.

Con este número, como ya habrán podido notar nuestros lectores, la revista *Apuntes* comienza una nueva etapa en sus esfuerzos literarios al extender nuestro espacio de publicación. Esta expansión refleja la creciente cantidad de materiales que nos son enviados, y el apoyo entusiasta de nuestros lectores. Esperamos que, al mismo tiempo que ampliamos nuestro espacio, podamos también ampliar nuestros servicios a nuestros lectores y a la comunidad hispana en general.

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# Creando una nueva humanidad: Reflexión sobre la tarea educativa de la Iglesia basada en Efesios 4:17-32

Pablo A. Jiménez

Sin lugar a dudas, la Educación Cristiana es el área de trabajo más importante de la Iglesia. Cuando lo vemos detenidamente, encontramos que *la Educación Cristiana es el medio a través del cual se canaliza el desarrollo de la misión de la Iglesia*. Si bien la evangelización es el primer paso --la puerta a través de la cual entramos a la vida en la fe de Jesucristo-- es a través de la Educación Cristiana que recibimos la enseñanza que nos permite crecer y desarrollarnos en la fe. En este sentido, el estudio de las Escrituras y la reflexión teológica son la base de todo el trabajo de la Iglesia. Todas las demás áreas de trabajo --misiones, evangelización, administración, mayordomía, consejo y orientación, etc.-- necesitan de la Educación Cristiana para funcionar eficazmente.

Un área importante de la tarea educativa de la Iglesia de Jesucristo es la Educación Teológica. Es por medio de la Educación Teológica que los líderes laicos y los agentes pastorales de nuestras comunidades de fe hispanoamericanas son capacitados para trabajar efectivamente en el ministerio cristiano. Por medio de la Educación Teológica el liderazgo de nuestras Iglesias desarrolla tanto las destrezas técnicas como los valores necesarios para pastorear nuestra sociedad.

Dado el lugar central que ocupan las Escrituras, tanto en la fe cristiana como en la iglesia cristiana en la América hispana, nos hemos dado a la tarea de buscar imágenes bíblicas que nos permitan hacer reflexiones teológico-pastorales sobre el propósito de la Educación Cristiana y sus implicaciones para la Educación Teológica. En este escrito ofrecemos un breve comentario de Efesios 4:17-32. En primer lugar, presentaremos un breve **Resumen** del mensaje del texto. Segundo, presentaremos el mensaje del **Texto en su contexto**. Finalmente, exploraremos las implicaciones educativas del **Texto en nuestro contexto**, esperando que estos apuntes puedan ser útiles para continuar el diálogo sobre el ministerio educativo de la Iglesia en la América Latina y en la comunidad hispana en los Estados Unidos.

## Resumen

En Ef. 4:17-32 encontramos una exhortación encabezada por el verbo "andar" (*peripateo*). El pasaje habla sobre la conducta del creyente. De este modo, *podemos afirmar que el tema central de este pasaje bíblico es la ética de la nueva vida en Cristo*.

El texto puede dividirse en dos secciones principales. La primera (vv. 17-24) presenta un contraste entre el "hombre" viejo y el nuevo. La segunda (vv. 25-32) contiene una serie de exhortaciones expresadas en forma de mandamientos.<sup>1</sup> Estas exhortaciones están directamente relacionadas con las de Ef. 5:1-18, donde continúa el argumento.

1. Para ser exactos, las exhortaciones se encuentran en el modo imperativo y están escritas en forma apodíctica.

## El texto en su contexto

En Ef. 4:17-24 se exhorta a la audiencia a no "andar como los gentiles". Aquí la palabra "andar" (*peripateo*) se usa en forma poética. En este texto, "andar" es sinónimo de "comportarse" o de "vivir". De hecho, algunas traducciones bíblicas (como la *Dios habla Hoy* y la *Biblia de Jerusalén*) prefieren usar la palabra "vivir" o la frase "manera de vivir" en este texto.

De primera intención, la frase "no andar como los gentiles" contradice la idea de que la epístola está dirigida a una iglesia no-judía, como lo era la comunidad cristiana en Efeso. Sin embargo, esta contradicción es sólo aparente dado que en el v. 17 la palabra "gentiles" se refiere a los no creyentes. Estos se describen como gente separada de Dios, que no pueden discernir la realidad divina (v. 18). Estos no creyentes estaban involucrados en varios pecados, especialmente en actos de inmoralidad sexual y codicia (v. 19).

Por su parte, los creyentes en Jesucristo han aprendido una nueva realidad. Ellos han "aprendido a Cristo" (v. 20). A través de la predicación y la enseñanza del Evangelio los creyentes han aprendido "la verdad que está en Jesús" (v. 21). Esta "verdad del Evangelio" abarca principalmente los puntos expuestos anteriormente en la epístola: Que Dios ha revelado el "misterio" que estaba guardado para el final de los tiempos a través de la obra redentora de Cristo (1:9 y 3:3-5). Este misterio no es otra cosa más que la inclusión de las personas no-judías en el plan de salvación (3:6).

*...que los gentiles son coherederos y miembros del mismo cuerpo, y copartícipes de la promesa en Cristo Jesús por medio del Evangelio.*

Así la epístola afirma que, en virtud de su muerte en la cruz, Cristo Jesús ha reunificado la humanidad anteriormente dividida creando así una nueva realidad: El cuerpo de Cristo (2:14-16). Por lo tanto, Efesios afirma que la iglesia es el cuerpo de Cristo (5:23); el lugar donde, al desaparecer las antiguas diferencias sociales, surge la nueva humanidad (4:22-24).

El tema de la nueva humanidad es precisamente el punto clave de esta porción bíblica. En los vv. 22-24, el texto contrasta al "hombre" viejo y al nuevo. Si colocamos la palabra "hombre" entre comillas se debe a que, en este verso, ésta traduce la palabra griega *anthropos*. En griego, *anthropos* es una palabra inclusiva que abarca tanto el género masculino como el femenino y que debe traducirse por "ser humano o humanidad". En griego, la palabra para "hombre" o "varón" es *aner*.

En Ef. 4:22-24 el texto llama de nuevo a la audiencia a abandonar la antigua manera de vivir (v. 22), manera que es comparada con un ser viejo que debe ser transformado en uno nuevo. Como afirma el v. 23, la transformación del ser antiguo en uno nuevo sólo es posible por medio de la "renovación de la mente". El concepto de la renovación del entendimiento se encuentra en otras epístolas paulinas, especialmente en Ro. 12:1-2 y I Co. 2:16. La renovación de la mente implica la adopción de nuevos valores: los valores del Reino de Dios. Estos nuevos valores nos hacen reevaluar nuestro comportamiento. La transformación de la persona ocurre cuando cambiamos nuestro comportamiento para adecuarlo a los nuevos valores que adquirimos. *En resumen, la nueva humanidad surge cuando los*



creyentes toman la práctica histórica de Jesús como modelo para la vida; cuando comienzan a vivir como Cristo vivió (5:1-2).

La transformación de la persona también implica una nueva forma de entender la realidad. Ahora la vida tiene propósito, ya que el creyente vive para "alabanza de la gloria de Dios" (1:6, 9 y 14). Ahora tenemos un modelo para la vida: Jesús, el Mesías. La nueva manera de vivir se compara a un "nuevo hombre" (v. 24). Esta vida debe reflejar el carácter de Dios; debe reflejar verdad, santidad y justicia (v. 24). Por lo tanto, en la vida cristiana el creyente debe imitar a Dios (5:1-2).

La primera sección de este pasaje bíblico (vv. 17-24) provee la base teológica para la exhortación ética que se extiende desde 4:25 hasta 5:18. Este "andar" del creyente debe corresponder a un modelo y a una realidad concreta. El modelo para la nueva vida es Dios mismo (4:24 y 5:1). La santidad, la fe, la justicia, el amor, en fin, el carácter de Dios es la norma o paradigma para la conducta del creyente. Así, la persona imitada determina la naturaleza de la imitación.<sup>2</sup> En este caso, para imitar a Dios es necesario vivir para "alabanza de su gloria". La realidad a la que el "nuevo hombre" debe corresponder es la realidad del cuerpo de Cristo. El creyente ya no vive solo, separado de Dios y de los demás. Ahora pertenece a una comunidad, pues está unido a los demás creyentes en un cuerpo que crece de día en día. Esto nos lleva a afinar que el creyente está unido también a toda la humanidad, tanto a los creyentes como a los no creyentes. Esto se debe a que el cuerpo de Cristo continuará creciendo hasta que "todas las cosas" sean sometidas a la autoridad del Hijo (1:10). Así el texto afirma la solidaridad humana, ya que toda la humanidad comparte el mismo destino pues en un momento u otro se enfrentará a la autoridad de Jesús el Cristo (compare con Fil. 2:10).

La segunda sección (vv. 25-32) presenta una serie de exhortaciones en forma de mandamientos. Los vv. 25 al 30 siguen una forma o patrón<sup>3</sup> definido de tres puntos: En primer lugar, se presenta una prohibición; segundo, esta prohibición es seguida por un mandamiento; y, tercero, el texto ofrece una motivación a cumplir el mandamiento. Los últimos versos (vv. 31-32) presentan un pequeño catálogo o listado de vicios y virtudes. Los vv. 25 al 32 nos ofrecen un total de cinco exhortaciones:

1. **Primera exhortación** (v. 25): Nos llama a hablar con la verdad al prójimo, echando a un lado la mentira. La motivación para este mandamiento es que somos miembros los unos de los otros (v. 25). Así, el motivo para hablar la verdad es la nueva solidaridad de la raza humana alcanzada por medio del sacrificio de Cristo.
2. **Segunda exhortación** (vv. 26-27): Aquí se nos manda dejar a un lado la ira. La motivación es que las fuerzas de la muerte aprovechan la ira para conducir a los creyentes al pecado.<sup>4</sup>

2. Marcus Barth, *Ephesians, Volume I*. (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1981), p. 592.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 545.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 515.

3. **Tercera exhortación** (v. 28): Esta llama al trabajo duro y responsable. De nuevo, la motivación es muy interesante. El creyente debe trabajar duro para ayudar al necesitado (v. 28) porque todos somos miembros de un solo cuerpo.
4. **Cuarta exhortación** (v. 29): La preocupación por el prójimo motiva también la cuarta exhortación. Los creyentes debemos evitar las palabras deshonestas y, en general, tratar de edificar a las personas que nos oyen (v. 29).
5. **Quinta exhortación** (v. 30): Finalmente, el texto indica que no debemos entristecer al Espíritu Santo (v. 30). La motivación es que el Espíritu es el sello o garantía de la nueva realidad, el cuerpo de Cristo (1:13-14). Por lo tanto, cuando entristecemos al Espíritu afectamos toda la iglesia.

El mismo criterio de solidaridad y cuidado mutuo domina los últimos versos. En esta sección un pequeño catálogo de vicios y virtudes nos recuerda que el creyente debe evitar toda clase de males (v. 31) y debe compartir las bondades de la gracia que ha recibido en Jesús (v. 32).

*En resumen, Ef. 4:17-32 habla sobre la ética de la nueva vida. Una ética que debe corresponder al carácter de Dios -- quien es el modelo para la acción y la conducta correcta -- y a la realidad del "cuerpo", la nueva realidad creada por la obra redentora de Cristo.*

### **El texto en nuestro contexto**

Para comprender la pertinencia de este pasaje bíblico para nosotros hoy, es necesario definir lo que entendemos por "Educación Cristiana". La Educación Cristiana es el proceso mediante el cual la iglesia busca que su feligresía adquiera y desarrolle conocimientos, actitudes, valores, modos de comportamiento, creencias y prácticas que reflejen la fe en Jesucristo. Como dice el Prof. Daniel S. Schipani:

*La Educación Cristiana consiste en los esfuerzos deliberados, sistemáticos y sostenidos, mediante los cuales la comunidad de fe se propone facilitar el desarrollo de estilos de vida cristianos por parte de personas y grupos.<sup>5</sup>*

Si aceptamos la definición de Schipani la pertinencia de Ef. 4:17-32 se hace evidente. La meta de la enseñanza religiosa en la iglesia local es que la feligresía desarrolle un estilo de vida que refleje valores cristianos. Al hablar de "estilos de vida cristianos" nos referimos al discipulado. El discipulado cristiano es la imitación y el seguimiento en nuestra vida del ejemplo y las enseñanzas de Jesús de Nazaret (Ef. 5:1-2). Jesús, el Cristo, es nuestro maestro por excelencia (Mt. 23:8-10). La vida cristiana consiste en seguir el ejemplo práctico que nos mostró Jesús en su ministerio, tanto a través de sus palabras como de sus acciones. *En*

5. Daniel S. Schipani, *El Reino de Dios y el ministerio educativo de la Iglesia* (Miami: Editorial Caribe, 1983), p. 13.



*resumen, la Educación Cristiana tiene, como meta que los creyentes vivan como Cristo vivió. En este sentido, podemos afirmar que la meta de la Educación Cristiana es que la Iglesia se "despoje del hombre viejo" (v. 22), "renueve su mente" (v. 23) y se "vista del hombre nuevo" (v. 24). La meta de la Educación Cristiana es crear una nueva humanidad solidaria, en el nombre de Jesucristo.*

Si recordamos que la transformación del ser humano sólo es posible cuando se adquieren nuevos valores -- es decir, cuando se "renueva el entendimiento" -- debemos concluir que la Educación Cristiana tiene un lugar central en la misión de la iglesia de Jesucristo. Es a través de la Educación Cristiana que los creyentes se enfrentan con los valores del Reino de Dios. Este encuentro entre los valores del Reino y los valores aceptados por la sociedad es parte de un proceso educativo que nunca termina. Es un proceso de evaluación constante.

En nuestro contexto, esa lucha entre los valores del Reino y los valores aceptados por la sociedad alcanza una importancia particular. Nuestro pueblo hispanoamericano sufre un bombardeo ideológico constante que le insta a cambiar los valores inherentes a nuestra cultura por valores y prácticas extranjeras. Los medios masivos de comunicación presentan estilos de vida prácticamente inalcanzables. Nuestros jóvenes crecen soñando con ser como el personaje de la televisión que al terminar el programa ha alcanzado fama y fortuna. Estos sueños imposibles llevan a muchas personas a optar por la economía paralela que ofrece el crimen para alcanzar el avance social que le niega la economía legal. Lo que es más, aún pastores y ministros caen presa de estos sueños de riqueza fácil. Esto les lleva a degradar tanto el evangelio como sus ministerios. Terminan predicando el falso evangelio del éxito, explotando sus congregaciones para poder alcanzar el nivel económico soñado. *Por lo tanto, La Educación Teológica busca propiciar ese encuentro crítico con los valores del Reino; un encuentro que nos lleve a cambiar nuestra manera de vivir; un encuentro que nos lleve a vivir como Cristo vivió.*

Por lo tanto, la vida cristiana se caracteriza por la práctica de la fe. El creyente se caracteriza por su "andar". De aquí que la ética cristiana tiene un lugar central tanto en la teología como en la reflexión pastoral de la Iglesia cristiana. *Esto implica que el currículo de nuestras instituciones educativas deben tener una clara orientación práctica. Buscamos desarrollar creyentes que vivan en forma práctica las implicaciones de su fe; que en el diario vivir reflejen a Cristo.*

Efesios también nos recuerda nuestra solidaridad con el mundo. Nos recuerda que compartimos el mismo futuro. El pueblo hispanoamericano comparte una misma historia y una misma esperanza. Compartimos la misma historia de opresión y sufrimiento; compartimos la misma esperanza de justicia y liberación. Desde Managua hasta Puerto Príncipe; desde Medellín hasta el Bronx, nuestro pueblo padece en distintos grados la violencia, el hambre y la explotación. Desde San José hasta Brownsville; desde Quito hasta San Juan, nuestra gente anhela bienestar integral (*shalom*) y justicia. Así, nuestras iglesias deben romper el aislamiento aprendido a través de los modelos misioneros antiguos; modelos que nos llevaban a separarnos de los demás invocando una teología donde la iglesia era vista como un espacio sagrado en medio de un mundo dominado por las fuerzas del mal. Efesios nos recuerda que en la fe cristiana toda la creación se ha convertido en un espacio sagrado en virtud del sacrificio de Cristo. En lo adelante el cuerpo de Cristo continuará creciendo hasta que "todas las cosas" sean



sometidas a la autoridad del Hijo (1:10). Ahora el creyente está unido también a toda la humanidad, tanto a los demás creyentes como a los no creyentes. *Por lo tanto, la misión cristiana trasciende lo religioso. La misión de la iglesia no se limita a lograr que las personas entren en el espacio sagrado de "la congregación de los santos". ¡Todo lo contrario! La misión de la iglesia nos llama a la solidaridad con el pueblo hispanoamericano que necesita la liberación del dominio de las fuerzas de la muerte, las consecuencias del pecado, la dependencia económica y la opresión política. Tenemos una misma historia; tenemos una misma esperanza.*

Ahora bien, esta liberación esperada sólo será posible por medio de una práctica liberadora de la fe. Una práctica que realmente refleje los valores del Reino de la vida en medio de una América azotada por el poder de las fuerzas de la muerte. Así, *cuando vivamos en forma práctica nuestro compromiso con el Cristo de la fe, estaremos cumpliendo la meta de nuestra vida: Vivir "para alabanza de la gloria de Dios" (1:6, 9 y 14).*

### Summary

*Given the integral relationship between the task of Christian Education and the development of the Church's mission, the author expounds upon Ephesians 4:17-32 in order to emphasize the importance that theological education has for an effective pastoral work within our society. This pastoral work, which is founded upon a Christ-like praxis, can only be effectively done through an integral-liberative approach to Christian Education in general, and theological education in specific, which seeks to liberate and empower our communities "to live as Christ did."*

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Deadline is January 10, 1992



# Mestizo Spirituality: Motifs of Sacrifice, Transformation, Thanksgiving, and Family in Four Mexican American Rituals

Roberto L. Gómez

This essay describes four significant Mexican American religious rituals. The four rituals are the game of the *piñata*, the *quinceañera*, the Sacrament of Baptism, and the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

I analyze each of the four Mexican American rituals from Carl Jung's psychological perspective. The focus is on the symbolism of each ritual and its meaning for the participants at the collective unconscious and conscious levels. June Singer, a Jungian analyst, defines the collective unconscious in the following way:

The collective unconscious is better conceived as an extension of the personal unconscious to its wider and broader base, encompassing contents which are held in common by the family, by the social group, by the tribe and nation, by race, and eventually by all of humanity. Each succeeding level of the unconscious may be thought of as going deeper and becoming more collective in nature. The wonder of the collective unconscious is that it is all these, all the legend and history of the human race, with its demons and its gentle saints, its mysteries and its wisdom, all within each of us --a microcosm within the macrocosm.<sup>1</sup>

Mexican Americans today are descendants of the Mexican Indians and the Spaniards. These Mexican Americans are mestizos. I believe that the motifs of sacrifice, transformation, thanksgiving, and family are present in the collective unconscious of mestizos. These four motifs appear in all four rituals. One theme is that of sacrifice. From a positive perspective, sacrifice is done willingly, and for the good of the family and the community. Sacrifice leads directly into transformation from one state of being into another. Transformation of the participant is the second theme. The third theme is one of thanksgiving.<sup>2</sup> The fourth theme is how these rituals help the building of family and community. Carl Jung offers the following insightful comment about sacrifice:

The annual sacrifice of a maiden to the dragon is perhaps the ideal sacrifice on a mythological level. In order to mollify the wrath of the Terrible Mother, the most beautiful girl was sacrificed as a symbol of man's concupiscence. Milder forms were the sacrifice of the firstborn and of various domestic animals. By sacrificing these valued objects of desire and possession, the instinctive desire, or libido, is given up in order that it may be regained in new forms. Through sacrifice man ransoms himself from the fear of death and is reconciled to the demands of Hades. In the

1 J. Singer, *Boundaries of the Soul: The Practice of Jung's Psychology* (Garden City, New York: Anchor Press, 1972), p. 95-96.

2. I owe the idea of thanksgiving as a theme in the four mestizo rituals to my friend and colleague, Rev. José L. Palos.

late cults the hero, who in olden times conquered evil and death through his labors, has become the divine protagonist, the priestly self-sacrifice, and renewer of life. Since he is now a divine figure and his sacrifice is a transcendental mystery whose meaning far exceeds the value of an ordinary sacrificial gift, this deepening of the sacrificial symbolism is a reversion to the old idea of human sacrifice, because a stronger and more total expression is needed to portray the idea of self sacrifice.<sup>3</sup>

Analysis of the four Mexican American rituals clearly demonstrates Jung's perspective of sacrifice. Furthermore, I propose that sensitivity to the various mestizo rituals and their profound though hidden meanings, helps in two ways. One gains a new understanding of the sacrifice of Christ from a mestizo perspective. One gains a mestizo perspective of what it means for the family and community to sacrifice and to do it in a spirit of thanksgiving.

The archetype of sacrifice is etched deeply in the Mexican American psyche. In ancient Mexico, Aztecs practiced ritualistic sacrifice of human beings. Aztecs sacrificed humans for the good of the community. When Hernán Cortés arrived in Mexico in the 1520's, Aztecs believed the universe was ending. To postpone the ending of the universe for fifty-two years, the Aztecs sacrificed to their deities thousands of prisoners from surrounding tribes.

A major event and ritual in Spain is bullfighting. The drama of bullfighting centers on the reality of death. The bull usually dies, but the bullfighter faces death also. When the bull dies, the sacrifice of the bull is for the good of the community for two reasons: to provide entertainment for the public and food for charity.

Jung also gives careful consideration to the theme of transformation. He writes of the importance and power of the archetypes of transformation as "true and genuine symbols."<sup>4</sup> Jung observes how transformation occurs through rituals. Here the transformation is brought about not directly, by passing through death and rebirth itself, but indirectly by participating in a process of transformation which is conceived of as taking place outside the individual. In other words, one has to witness, or take part in, some rite of transformation. This rite may be a ceremony such as the Mass, where there is a transformation of substances. Through his presence at the rite the individual participates in divine grace.<sup>5</sup> As with the theme of sacrifice, Jung's thinking about transformation is crucial in developing this essay.

Thanksgiving is the third motif in the collective unconscious of the Mexican American. Each of the four rituals shows how Mexican Americans express their gratitude for life. Don E. Saliers writes in his book *The Soul in Paraphrase* of the

3. C. Jung, "The Sacrifice," *Symbols of Transformation, Collected Works*, Vol. 5, Bollingen Series XX (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1976), par. 671.

4. C. Jung, "Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious," *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, *ibid.*, Vol. 9, Part I, par. 80.

5. C. Jung, "Concerning Rebirth," *ibid.*, par. 205.



centrality of thanksgiving in the Christian faith.<sup>6</sup> Learning to celebrate each ritual appropriately allows for an authentic expression of gratitude.

The four mestizo rituals are part of family and community life. Understanding how family and community benefit from these rituals, helps one in his or her family and community relationships.

The four rituals in mestizo culture relate to religious life. The game of the *piñata* is semi-religious. In it, prevenient grace<sup>7</sup> may occur in the collective unconscious. The *quinceañera* is also a semi-religious ritual. In it, justifying grace may occur at the conscious level. In Baptism, obviously a religious ritual, prevenient grace, justifying grace, and sanctifying grace may occur at the collective unconscious and/or conscious level. Holy Communion is a religious ritual in which justifying grace and sanctifying grace may occur at the conscious level.

### The Ritual of the Piñata

The ritual of the *piñata* is celebrated at birthdays and the *posadas* (a Mexican American time of preparation for the birth of Jesus which occurs during Advent). Virgilio Elizondo, a Mexican American Roman Catholic priest who has written about mestizo culture and spirituality, gives the following definition of the *piñata* ritual:

Piñatas for children are always part of the *posadas*. Begun by the Franciscans in the area of Guanajuato, Mexico, they were made as a representation of the devil, who cannot be seen. Because man could not see his enemy, the person who strikes at the piñata and tries to break it is blindfolded. He fights against evil with the rod of virtue, and if he perseveres to the end, the glory of God comes down on him and the others. This is the theological teaching of the piñata.<sup>8</sup>

Based on my personal reflection, I suggest that at the collective unconscious level, the *piñata*, a papier-maché figure, may be more than a representation of the devil. The *piñata* may also be an object of worth that is sacrificed for life. In ancient Aztec thought, duality was a major theme in cultural and religious thinking.<sup>9</sup> For instance, Aztec deities have dual natures. Carl Jung's psychological theory also emphasizes the duality of beings.<sup>10</sup> A being can be both good and evil.

The *piñata* is an archetype with a duality of good and evil. Although Elizondo contends that the *piñata* represents the devil, it is difficult to accept that *piñatas* made to look like a benign creature such as Big Bird, Mickey Mouse, Snow White, a Star, a Christmas decoration, or Santa Claus represent the devil. *Piñatas* are also made to look like monsters and evil beings, even devils. An argument can be made for the duality of the *piñata's* nature which includes both good and evil.

6. D.E. Saliers, *The Soul in Paraphrase* (New York, New York: The Seabury Press, 1980), pp. 50-55.

7. I am using the traditional definitions of the Wesleyan understanding of grace: prevenient, justifying, and sanctifying grace.

8. V. Elizondo, *Christianity and Culture* (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1975), p. 184.

9. M. León-Portilla, *Aztec Thought and Culture* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), pp. 80-103.

10. C. Jung, "Answer to Job," *Psychology and Religion*, op. cit., Vol. 11, par. 608.

At the collective unconscious level, the family or community sacrifices the *piñata* for the good of the family or community. During a child's birthday, a family sacrifices the *piñata* in gratitude for the past year of life and in hope for another year of life for the child. During the *posadas* a family, a church, or a community, sacrifices the *piñata* for another year of life for the baby Jesus. The ritual of the *piñata* takes place during the *posadas*, almost at the end of the chronological year. It would appear that the community also sacrifices the *piñata* in thanksgiving for the present year and hoping for another year of life and prosperity. During the party the *piñata* is presented as an object of bright colors, attention, and depending what it represents, it may even be attractive. The *piñata* is then strung up in such a way that it can move up and down. At this point the *piñata* is transformed from an object of appeal to an object of derision. The youngest children, usually two or three years old and without blindfold, swing at the *piñata* first. Older children take their turns but are now blindfolded. The *piñata* suffers many blows. It becomes a model of the "suffering servant." Eventually, the *piñata* is broken. Candies fall from it for the benefit of the children. The *piñata* is transformed into a blessing for all. As the children receive the candy from the *piñata* there is a genuine spirit of thanksgiving for the gift of the candy. The *piñata* ritual is for children but it involves everyone, siblings, parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, and close friends. It is a time for the family to gather and affirm their family ties.

My wife, oldest daughter and I had an experience with a *piñata* that convinced me of the motifs of sacrifice and transformation in the *piñata* ritual. When my daughter Laura was two years old, she became aware of Santa Claus. Everywhere we went during the Fall of 1984, she saw images of Santa Claus. After Thanksgiving, she saw men dressed as Santa Claus in the malls. Laura experienced Santa Claus as a warm, large elderly man with white hair and a white beard. She also experienced Santa Claus as a kind and friendly person.

A Santa Claus *piñata* was brought to the traditional children's Christmas party at our Mexican American United Methodist Church. The children admired the Santa Claus *piñata*. Later, the *piñata* was strung up. Laura was the first child chosen to strike the Santa Claus *piñata*.

Laura tapped the *piñata* lightly. Older children were blindfolded. They took turns swinging at the *piñata*. The event became increasingly violent. Finally, the oldest children (8 to 10 years old) broke the *piñata*. Candies fell to the floor. The children and youth scrambled for the candy.

Laura's reaction was one of growing horror and finally shock at seeing Santa Claus torn apart. She stood dazed. She wept, saying over and over, "Mommy, Santa Claus hurt." Several minutes later, a church member arrived at the party dressed as Santa Claus. He came in with a hearty leap, greeted everyone, and proceeded to hand out gifts to the children. Laura's eyes were filled with disbelief, then wonder, and finally excitement. She went to Santa Claus and gave him a candy. Santa Claus knelt, hugged her, and gave her a present. Then, Santa Claus left.

What an overwhelming introduction to the Christian faith for a young child! For in the space of half an hour or so, Laura experienced one who was initially welcomed, then strung up, beaten, and torn apart. A frenzied mob hurt and killed



Santa Claus. And yet, moments later, Laura experienced the resurrection of Santa Claus. During this entire time, my wife, I, and several friends were with Laura. The experience drew us closer together. Suffering, sacrifice, death, new life, thanksgiving, and family were major realities that night. Perhaps the most important reality was the resurrection of Santa Claus that Laura experienced. Can another child have the same experience as Laura? My guess is that it can happen again. It may happen, especially if the *piñata* is in the form of Santa Claus<sup>11</sup> and a person dressed as Santa Claus arrives at the celebration after the breaking of the *piñata*. Recent faith studies indicate that young children are deeply impressed by family and community activities.

James Fowler describes the development of faith in a young child in his book *Stages of Faith*. Intuitive-Projective faith is the fantasy-filled, imitative phase in which the child can be powerfully and permanently influenced by examples, moods, actions and stories of the visible faith of primarily related adults. The stage most typical of the child three to seven, it is marked by a relative fluidity of thought patterns. The child is continually encountering novelties for which no stable operations of knowing have been formed. The imaginative processes underlying fantasy are unrestrained and uninhibited by logical thought. In league with forms of knowing dominated by perception, imagination in this stage is extremely productive of long lasting images and feelings (positive and negative) that later, more stable and self-reflective valuing and thinking will have to order and sort out. This is the stage of first self-awareness. The "self-aware" child is egocentric as regards the perspectives of others. Here we find first awareness of death and sex and of the strong taboos by which cultures and families insulate those powerful areas.<sup>12</sup>

The mestizo family and community introduce their young children to the motifs of sacrifice, death, transformation, thanksgiving, and family and community building through the ritual of the *piñata*. At an early age, the mestizo child receives from family and community a foundation for spiritual formation.

### The Quinceañera

The *quinceañera* tradition as it is practiced by Mexican Americans has sexist elements which appear in this descriptive essay. The author of this essay does not endorse sexism. As with other Mexican American customs, the *quinceañera* is changing. In future years, it will be interesting to see how the celebration of a *quinceañera* addresses the issue of sexism.

Traditional Mexican American families celebrate the *quinceañera*, literally, the fifteenth year of a daughter's life. When a daughter is 15 years old, her family will have a big celebration to present her to society. Always, there is a church worship service and then the party. Roman Catholics and Protestants observe the *quinceañera*. Whether a family has a *quinceañera* or not often depends on the

11. The symbolic figure of Santa Claus is limited to the Mexican American context and is not found in the Latin American context outside the United States. Santa Claus is not an important symbol for Hispanic-Indian Christmas celebrations as it is for North Americans.

12. J.W. Fowler, *Stages of Faith* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1981), p. 133.

family's acculturation into North American society. The more acculturated a family is, the less likely it will celebrate a *quinceañera* for its daughters.

*Quinceañeras* are time consuming, expensive, and involve many people. A *quinceañera* involves fifteen young women and fifteen young men as escorts. The family gets many sponsors for everything one can imagine needed to celebrate a *quinceañera*.

At a collective unconscious level, we can say a sacrifice occurs in a *quinceañera* at several levels. The family sacrifices its daughter by publicly saying she is now available for marriage. From the security of her family, she now goes out to society. On the negative side, she loses the immediacy and the protection of her family. On the positive side, when she marries, she becomes a stabilizing force in marriage, experiences giving birth, and nurtures the family.

The family sacrifices keeping the daughter for itself. The family gives her to society for the good of society: stabilization, creation, and nurture. The young girl takes on the role of the "suffering servant" for the good of her new family and the community. In the mestizo culture, the woman is truly a tragic heroine.

The classic example of the mestizo young woman who sacrificially becomes a suffering servant for her community is the Virgin of Guadalupe, the Mexican Indian representation of Mary the Mother of Jesus. The mestizo evangelical community has doctrinal problems with the idea of the Virgin of Guadalupe. Thus the mestizo evangelical community ignores the powerful cultural and religious symbolism of the Virgin of Guadalupe on a conscious level. Still, I believe the Virgin of Guadalupe is in the collective unconscious of the mestizos. Indeed, after Christmas and Easter, the most holy day for the all mestizo churches, Roman Catholic or Protestant is *el día de las Madres*.

At a conscious level, and in an intentional way, the *quinceañera* is a powerful act of transformation. At the start of the ceremony the daughter is presented as a young girl. She arrives at the ceremony with her parents and holding her favorite doll. At the end of the ceremony she is now a young woman. Her dress is a beautiful, formal white gown. She looks like a bride. In fact, she is now escorted by a young man of her choice. As part of the *quinceañera*, she is crowned, but this usually takes place at the social hall. The family and *compadres* are involved. Of course, one wonders if others in attendance are future family members.

After a family requests a *quinceañera*, the pastor spends several sessions discussing the religious significance of coming to church and having a worship service for a *quinceañera*. The family is formally asking God to bless their daughter now that she is a young woman. The *quinceañera* offers opportunities for evangelism and spiritual formation as well as pastoral care (the change in the family system).

A sermon about Esther as a role model is appropriate. The sermon can emphasize Esther's sensitivity to her family, heritage, and faith. The sermon can illustrate that Esther was willing to sacrifice her life for the survival of her family and community.

Here are excerpts from a ritual used by The Methodist Church of Mexico for the *quinceañera*. During the worship service, the pastor asks the young woman,



Do you give thanks to God for allowing you to reach this age? Do you promise to live with Jesus Christ in your heart so he will inspire in you the highest ideals of life? Will you endeavor to live your youth by the ideals of the Christian faith that you may inspire other youth to do the same?<sup>13</sup>

Then the pastor offers the following prayer:

Oh blessed heavenly Father, with all our heart we raise this prayer to you with sincere gratitude for the fifteen years of life of your daughter. You, Lord, who have taken care of her and blessed her, we ask you not to abandon her. She will need you during the difficult years of adolescence and youth.

Oh, Lord, receive her life and heart with gratitude, because you need them. There is so much good to do in this world and you have called her to collaborate with you.

May her life be in your holy hands and may she give all honor and glory to your name. All these we ask in Christ our blessed Lord. Amen.<sup>14</sup>

I cannot help wonder how much of the prayer "Oh, Lord, receive her life and heart with gratitude, because you need them" has its roots in Aztec thought. Think of what Aztec priests prayed as they offered still beating human hearts to their deities. The prayer in which the pastor addresses God could be coincidental with an ancient Aztec prayer, but perhaps not.

The *quinceañera* is also a formal and religious event for parents to thank publicly God for their daughter's life. The prayer mentioned above which is said by the pastor includes thanksgiving for the young woman's life. Whether it happens during the worship service itself or later in the party, parents share a word of testimony thanking God for their daughter's life.

## The Ritual of Baptism

Elizondo offers a helpful description of Baptism in the Hispanic context:

One of these moments which is most important in a Latin American family is Baptism, for the people value the family highly. Baptism is the sign through which the person becomes incorporated into the Christian community. The Spanish speaking have a profound sense of *compadrazgo*, the spiritual relationship that is established between the godparents and the parents of the baptized child. This bond is deeper than blood relationships, because it is freely chosen and freely accepted.<sup>15</sup>

13. *Ritual para el Acto de Gratitud y Consagración de los XV Años* (Iglesia Metodista de México) Translation is my own.

14. *Ibid.*

15. V. Elizondo, *Christianity...*, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

Mestizos understand a child to be a gift of God. In the Sacrament of Baptism, a mestizo family intentionally and prayerfully thanks God for their child.

When a child is to be baptized, mestizos say "le vas a cortar la colita" or you are going to cut off his or her tail. At the collective unconscious level, the implication is that in Baptism, the Christian community sacrifices the child. God transforms the child from a child with a devil into a child of God.

The Christian Sacrament of Baptism is itself a sacrifice since one is baptized into death. The old self dies. The prime force in the Sacrament of Baptism is God's grace in Jesus Christ which transforms the person being baptized. God's grace transforms a person who belongs to the devil and lives in sin into one who belongs to God and lives a saintly life.

During an early part of Christian church history, the sacrifice, death, transformation, new life, and thanksgiving motifs were dramatically demonstrated with a total immersion of the person being baptized (this is still true in some church traditions such as the Baptist church). The person was immersed into waters which represented death. In the water, the person's old nature was sacrificed. Yet, through the water, the person was transformed by God's grace. The person emerged from the water with a new life based on Jesus Christ, a profound sense of gratitude for the forgiveness of sin, and belonging to the Christian community. In the new United Methodist Hymnal,<sup>16</sup> both Baptismal covenants include a prayer of thanksgiving over the water.

In Baptism, family and community are built through the *compadres*. The ritual of Baptism may strengthen family relationships. Other times, special friends become *compadres* and for all practical purposes become family. Mestizos carefully choose who their *compadres* will be. The asking is intentional as is the accepting by those who are asked.

The two rituals in the new United Methodist Hymnal for the Sacrament of Baptism invite the entire congregation present to become an extended family of the person or persons receiving the Sacrament of Baptism:

With God's help we will proclaim the good news and live according to the example of Christ. We will surround these persons with a community of love and forgiveness, and that they may grow in their trust of God, and be found faithful in their service to others. We will pray for them, that they may be true disciples who walk in the way that leads to life.<sup>17</sup>

Preparation for the Sacrament of Baptism is an opportunity for evangelism as parents and godparents-to-be are taught about the Christian faith. As parents and other family members prepare for Baptism, pastoral care issues may arise which need to be addressed. The preparation time is also an opportunity for spiritual formation as Christians are asked to think about their Baptism and recommit themselves to Jesus Christ. The Sacrament of Baptism, when done appropriately, transcends its social aspects and becomes a spirit forming event for its participants.

16. C. Young, ed, *The United Methodist Hymnal* (Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1989), pp. 37 and 43.

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 35 and 40.



## The Sacrament of Holy Communion

The fourth ritual is Holy Communion. Of course, it is more than a ritual, it is a Sacrament. For the Roman Catholic mestizos, the Mass is center of religious life. The mestizo who is active in the Roman Catholic expression of the Christian faith participates in Mass at least weekly and at times even more frequently. The Mass is celebrated at daily worship services, weddings, anniversaries, funerals, and memorials.

Because of the methods and manner of Protestant evangelization of mestizos, the Sacrament of Holy Communion is de-emphasized. The frequent celebration of Holy Communion is one of the Protestant mestizo's great losses. The preached Word of God and a more spontaneous style of worship become important in the religious life of the Protestant mestizo. However, the de-emphasis on Holy Communion is a high price to pay to become a Protestant mestizo.

Ironically, Holy Communion was central in John Wesley's practice of worship as United Methodist Bishop Ole Borgen demonstrates in his book, *John Wesley on the Sacraments*.<sup>18</sup> Protestant mestizos need to recover the centrality and frequency of Holy Communion in the practice of the Christian faith. Protestant mestizos must not forgo the preached Word, the spontaneous worship service, and service to the community. Instead, Protestant mestizos need to balance their practice of Christian worship and service.

The themes of sacrifice, death, transformation, thanksgiving, and family or community are major motifs in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Each theme is an essential part of the Sacrament.

In Holy Communion, Christians remember that the Lord Jesus suffered for humanity, was sacrificed for humans on the cross, and died for humanity. Christians remember in a spirit of gratitude that Jesus was transformed from the Galilean carpenter to the Messiah, from one who was dead to one who is living, and now is present in his family, the church.

Yet, Holy Communion is more than just remembering. For in Holy Communion, Christians also experience sacrifice and death of the self, transformation of one's self, a spirit of thanksgiving, and the creation of family. This happens, because as Bishop Borgen points out, for Wesley, the Trinity is present and active in the Sacrament of Holy Communion.<sup>19</sup> Holy Communion is an intervention of God for humanity. God is truly present as Creator. God is present as the Suffering Servant who becomes Redeemer.

In Holy Communion, participants experience God's sacrifice of his Son Jesus for the sake and future of humanity and all creation. Believers present themselves to God as living sacrifices. Believers sacrifice their will, their thoughts, and their deeds which go against God's will, thoughts, and actions. God transforms those persons who are receptive to the redeeming presence of Christ, into Christian disciples. God is present as the Holy Spirit who builds community. Through the Holy Spirit, Christian disciples experience each other as family.

18. O.E. Borgen, *John Wesley on the Sacraments: A Definitive Study of John Wesley's Theology of Worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Francis Asbury Press, 1985), p. 120.

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 67-68.

Depending on our receptivity and God's will, the Trinity relates to us in Holy Communion through prevenient grace, justifying grace, or sanctifying grace. Bishop Borgen states that Wesley affirmed the Lord's Supper as both a converting and confirming ordinance. Borgen quotes Wesley: "I showed at large: (1) That the Lord's Supper was ordained by God to be a means of conveying to men either preventing, or justifying, or sanctifying grace, according to their several necessities."<sup>20</sup>

In the Protestant mestizo worship services, Holy Communion is an awkward attachment to a regular preaching service. Holy Communion occurs infrequently. Often the Sacrament takes place hurriedly, without mystery and power. Because of the de-emphasis on Holy Communion, the Protestant mestizo gives little attention to remembering our Lord Jesus' suffering, sacrifice, and death. The brevity of the Sacrament causes one to overlook Jesus's transformation into the eternal Christ in the resurrection. Few services of Holy Communion in the Protestant mestizo context celebrate that Jesus Christ is now present with his people through his family, the church. As a result, the elements of joy and thanksgiving are often missing in Protestant mestizo observances of Holy Communion.

Protestant mestizos need to learn that in Holy Communion, Christians have an active role. As God calls us in Jesus Christ, Protestant mestizos should remember that in Jesus Christ we sacrifice those impediments that keep us from God and our fellow beings. In Jesus Christ our old self dies. Jesus Christ transforms us by God's grace into his disciples and makes us part of his community. We respond joyfully, gratefully and with deepened commitment to Jesus as Lord.

By the grace of God there are signs of a new understanding of and appreciation for Holy Communion in the Protestant mestizo church. The recent ecumenical movement contributes to a growing appreciation of our mestizo spirituality.<sup>21</sup>

## Conclusion

Mestizos are obsessed with sacrifice, death, transformation, thanksgiving, and family. For mestizos, these themes are everyday realities. Mestizos are always sacrificing. Mestizos are always dying. Mestizos undergo transformation in their sacrificing. Mestizos take time to thank God for life and its blessings. Mestizos celebrate and rejoice life in our fiestas. And, it takes place within the family and within the community.

Spain's secular and religious literature abounds with the themes mentioned above. The story of Don Quijote, Saint Ignatius of Loyola's autobiography, Saint Teresa of Avila's autobiography and *The Dark Night of the Soul* of Saint Juan de la Cruz repeatedly illustrate the four themes.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 119.

21. Justo L. González, *Mañana: Christian Theology from a Hispanic Perspective* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), p. 74.



Aztec history is steeped with the realities of sacrifice, death, transformation, thanksgiving, and family. Unfortunately, much of the Aztec literature is lost. However, modern *corridos* (Mexican ballads) have as their major themes sacrifice, death, transformation, thanksgiving, and family. One such ballad is "Adelita" which is about the wives or women of the Mexican peasant revolutionaries. These women sacrificed family, economic security, and status (what little they had) to be with their husbands. They provided for their men and nursed them when ill or when wounded. In some instances, these women also fought.

The famous image of the *adelita* is one of a young Mexican peasant woman with a sombrero, a colorful Mexican dress, a rifle, and belts of bullets crisscrossing her chest. Through sacrifice and death, the *adelita* was transformed into a legendary and tragic heroine of courage, determination, strength, and worth. Mexicans remember the *adelitas* with gratitude for their role in the revolution.

Many of us worry about the future, the future for all of humanity, for all life --animal and plant--, and for this good earth. Can we make it? Can we survive to become true stewards of God's wonderful creation? We can, but it will take sacrificing, dying, experiencing transformation, being grateful, and becoming family.

Mestizos contribute to the discussion of how to survive. Mestizos witness to the experience of God's grace in their sacrificing, dying, experiencing transformation, expressing gratitude, and becoming family. To mestizos, the realities of sacrificing, dying, experiencing transformation, thanksgiving, and becoming family are major issues in spiritual formation. I would think it would also be true for all people on this planet earth.

The rituals of the *piñata*, of the *quinceañera*, of Baptism, and Holy Communion help mestizos deal with the realities of sacrifice, death, transformation, thanksgiving, family, and community. A religious sensitivity to these four rituals helps mestizos in their spiritual journey, in their relationship to God, and in their relationship to family and community.

Accepting God's grace means an openness to sacrifice. We sacrifice that which separates us from God. We sacrifice that which inhibits our relationship with God. Through prevenient grace, God helps us prepare ourselves for such sacrifice.

Accepting God's grace in Jesus Christ means an openness to death. Our old self dies and a new self is born. Through justifying grace, we die to or put aside that part of our self which is destructive to our spirituality. That does not mean we put aside all of our cultural and spiritual heritages. Rather, we incorporate those traditions in our cultural and spiritual heritage which strengthen our relationship with God, with our family, and with our community. We are justified as God's family.

As our old self dies, God transforms us from being separated from God, family, and community, to those who belong to God, have a family and a community. God transforms us for the good of family and community, and surprisingly, for our own good. God transforms us so we can receive and give, listen and speak, sacrifice and celebrate, live and die within God's realm. Sanctifying grace gives us the power to be faithful to God and to grow in our relationship with God, family, and community.

Accepting God's grace also means to grow in the spirit of thanksgiving. As we become grateful for life, our life, the neighbor's life, animal and plant life, mother earth, and the universe, we cannot help but become God's stewards of life, earth, and the universe.

The rituals of the *piñata*, the *quinceañera*, Baptism, and Holy Communion continually lift sacrifice, death, transformation, thanksgiving, and family as motifs of power, mystery, and grace. My hope and prayer are that the Protestant mestizos accept and use the gifts of grace in these four religious rituals. I also hope and pray that the four rituals become gifts of God's grace for all people throughout the world.

### Resumen

*En este ensayo el autor analiza cuatro importantes rituales México-americanos utilizando las categorías psicológicas de Carl Jung. Los rituales analizados en el ensayo son el juego de la piñata, la celebración de las quinceañeras, los sacramentos del bautismo y la Santa Comunión. El simbolismo de cada ritual y su significado colectivo, consciente e inconsciente, para los que participan en ellos, son analizados prestándole especial atención a los aspectos históricos y socio-culturales presentes en la experiencia México-americana. Se concluye que los rituales antes mencionados representan en forma vívida las realidades de sacrificio, muerte, transformación, agradecimiento y vida familiar, como símbolos de poder, misterio y gracia.*

### University of Florida

The University of Florida seeks to make an appointment (subject to budgetary approval) at the advanced Assistant/Associate level in the *History of Christianity* with special competence in the study of religion in the Americas. The position requires the ability to teach the introductory survey of Christian history as well as intermediate and advanced courses in Latin American religion. Also requires a record of distinguished research and publication, teaching excellence, and collegiality. The successful candidate will be expected to share the University's commitment to Latin American Studies (as evidenced by the excellent library collection and a renowned interdisciplinary program). Appointment is effective August, 1992. Application deadline is **January 1, 1992**. Candidates should submit their applications prior to November 15, 1991. Send c.v., cover letter, and three letters of reference to Chair, Search Committee, Department of Religion, 125 Dauer Hall, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

### Wesley Theological Seminary Position in Systematic Theology

Wesley Theological Seminary seeks to fill a tenure track position in Systematic Theology. In addition to disciplined knowledge of 19th and 20th century theology up to and including current theological developments, competence in the history of doctrine, particularly the Patristic, Reformation, and Methodist traditions is required. Candidates should also have competence in the history of philosophy and the philosophical backgrounds of Christian theology, with particular emphasis on hermeneutic, philosophy of history, and critical social philosophy. These competencies should focus in a commitment to and ability at constructive theology that serves the church and its mission. Candidates should have a deep concern for the formation of pastoral ministry and a personal history of involvement in the church and engagement in the issues of the ecumenical movement. Ph.D. required; M.Div. preferred. Send letter of application together with a curriculum vitae, letters of reference, and academic record to Dean M. Douglas Meeks, Wesley Theological Seminary, 4500 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20016. Application deadline: November 30, 1991.



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### Apuntes bibliográficos

José A. Reyes, *Los hispanos en los Estados Unidos: Un reto y una oportunidad para la iglesia* (Cleveland, Tennessee: White Wing Publishing House and Press, 1985), pp. 136.

Esta valiosa reflexión teológica refleja la transformación evidente en el andar cristiano de los hispanos de orientación conservadora en los EE.UU. Podría argumentarse que éstos han sido generalmente ignorados en las reflexiones teológicas hispanas que no participan de la misma orientación. El autor —quien apropiadamente se refiere a la realidad hispana en este país como "un guisado de verduras"—, encarna en sí mismo ese "guisado" con una interesante y variada experiencia educativa y pastoral. José A. Reyes, aunque es obispo de la Iglesia de Dios de la Profecía y ha recibido extensa educación teológica, es también ingeniero agrónomo.

El libro procede a identificar en forma breve, pero sustanciosa, numerosos aspectos sociales y culturales de las realidades hispanas en los EE.UU. que considera esenciales para un mejor entendimiento de las mismas. Sin embargo, estos aspectos no sólo son explorados para proveer importante información socio-cultural, sino que se examinan a la luz de una teología de ministerio que se ocupa principalmente de las categorías de la evangelización, y contextualización.

Todo esto sirve como preámbulo para una discusión sobre el evangelismo entre los hispanos —los cuales son comparados a un campo listo para la cosecha—, que incorpora al trabajo social como parte integral de este trabajo evangelístico.

Javier Quiñones-Ortiz

Judith Noble, Jaime Lacasa, *The Hispanic Way: Aspects of Behavior, Attitudes, and Customs in the Spanish-Speaking World* (Lincolnwood, Illinois: Passport Books, 1991), pp. 113.

Esta es una de las pocas obras que logra su propósito precisamente a base de generalizaciones. La meta de los autores es facilitar el proceso de comunicación cultural entre aquellos que no son de habla hispana y los que lo son. Para poder alcanzar esta meta, los autores exponen en forma sumamente concisa 73 conceptos que —a opinión de los mismos— son de especial importancia para comprender mejor nuestra forma de ser como hispanos.

En este libro el lector encontrará reseñas sobre el trasfondo socio-histórico y cultural de muchos aspectos esenciales de nuestra cultura. La obra incluye discusiones sobre celebraciones y días de fiesta, expresiones verbales, códigos legales, el uso de apellidos, la religión, etc.

Aunque el libro ciertamente puede utilizarse como un valioso recurso para introducir a otros a las distintas realidades representadas en la experiencia hispana, me parece que resulta igualmente útil entre nosotros mismos.

Javier Quiñones-Ortiz

## **Announcement**

### **The Visiting Hispanic Research Scholar Program at The Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley**

#### **Purpose**

The program brings a Hispanic/Latino scholar to the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley, a member school of the Graduate Theological Union, to pursue research and writing on the issue of theology and ministry from the perspectives of United States Hispanics/Latinos. The scholar will be expected to share his or her findings with JSTB and other GTU faculties through a lecture, seminar or workshop. Similarly, the scholar will be expected to have some contact and dialogue with JSTB and other GTU students. No regular course teaching will be required.

#### **Qualifications**

Persons of Hispanic/Latino origin working in the United States are eligible. Such persons must have shown some ability for doing research and writing in the areas of theology or ministry. Persons with backgrounds other than theology or religious studies may apply if they are using their discipline to elucidate contexts of ministry and praxis among United States Hispanics. The program is open to persons of other denominations beside Roman Catholic.

Those who wish to apply as a Visiting Research Scholar must submit a proposal in which they outline the relationship between practical ministerial contexts and their intended research. The research may be done in conjunction with a specific ministry or pastoral project. Proposals should be submitted by November 30, 1991 for the 1992-93 program (and by November 30, 1992 for the 1993-94 program). The Visiting Scholar for 1992-93 will be announced in January 1992.

#### **Stipends**

The Teagle Foundation has awarded a grant for each of the first three years of the Visiting Hispanic Research Scholar Program. A stipend of \$22,000 is available for the 1992-93 academic year.

**For further information and an application form please write or call:** Dr. Allan Figueroa Deck, S.J., Director of the Hispanic Ministry Center, Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley, 1735 LeRoy Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94709